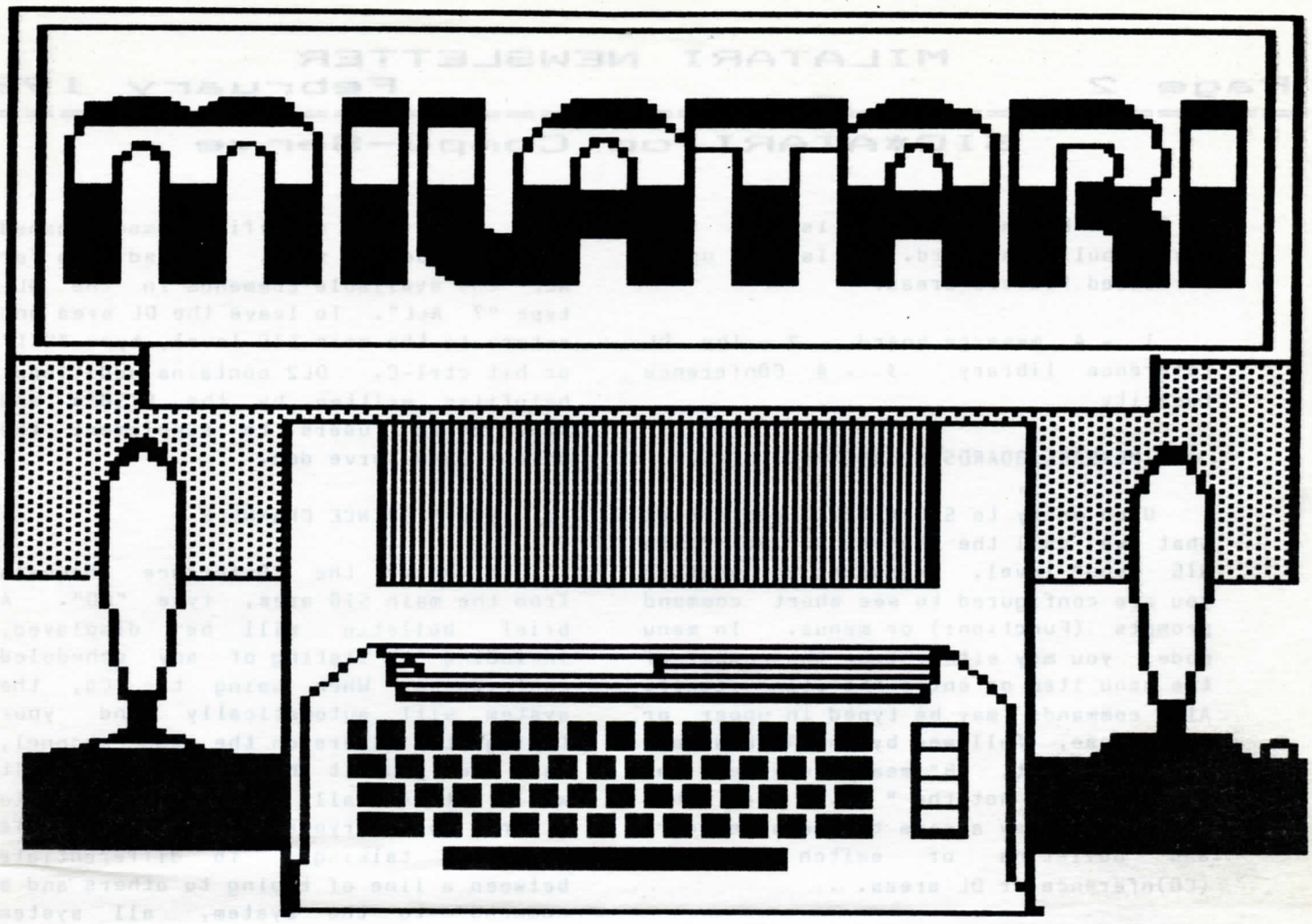


COMPUTER ART BY DICK SKOVER

MILATARI NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 1985
Volume 4 Number 3 Price $1.50

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Feb 14th 7:30 PM	Board of Directors meeting Chris Stieber's home
Feb 16th 1:30 PM 2:00 PM 2:30 PM 3:30 PM	MILATARI East meeting Beginning BASIC Class Beginning ASSEMBLER — organization meeting ASSEMBLER SIG meeting Business meeting
Feb 26th 7:30 PM	ATR8000 SIG meeting Don Wilcox's home
Feb 28th 7:30 PM	MILATARI West meeting Waukesha State Bank Continental Software's TAX ADVANTAGE demo

SIG*ATARI on Compu-Serve

SIG*ATARI on CompuServe is more than just a bulletin board. It is made up of 3 related feature areas:

1 - A message board 2 - The DL reference library 3 - A COnference facility

1 - MESSAGE BOARDS & FUNCTION: LEVEL

Upon entry to SIG*ATARI, you are at what we call the "Function:" or "Main SIG Menu" level, depending on whether you are configured to see short command prompts (Function:) or menus. In menu mode, you may either type the number of the menu item or enter the item itself. All commands may be typed in upper or lower case, followed by the RETURN key. (In this text, "B" means to enter the letter only, not the " "). From this point, you may access the message board and bulletins or switch to the (CO)nference or DL areas.

SIG*ATARI is furthur divided into sections by specific sub-topic. Each sub-topic has a message section, a related DL reference library, and corresponding channels in the (CO)nference facility. The sections are numbered from 0-10, but not all sections are available. The default section is 0.

To see a list of the available sections, type "SN". To read a short description of any section #, type "X#". To see a list of valid commands, type a "?". To view the Instructions for ALL commands, type "I". To see the details of a particular command 'xxx', type just "? xxx".

2 - DL REFERENCE LIBRARIES (Databases)

To enter the DL reference library, or database, where we archive text and programs available to all members, type "DL#" where "#"= the section number. For a list of valid commands, type "?". To view help for a specific command named 'xxx', type "? xxx". To read help for ALL the available commands in the DL, type "? ALL". To leave the DL area and return to the main SIG level, type "EXI" or hit ctrl-C. DL2 contains additional helpfiles written by the SYSOPs and experienced users to supplement the online CompuServe doc.

3 - (CO)NFERENCE CHANNELS

To enter the COnference channels from the main SIG area, type "CO". A brief bulletin will be displayed, including a listing of any scheduled conferences. When using the CO, the system will automatically send your typing to others on the same channel, only when you hit the (RETURN) key. It will automatically show your name to others so everyone will know who is currently talking. To differentiate between a line of typing to others and a command to the system, all system commands must begin with a "/" in the first column. To see a list of valid CO commands type "/HELP". To exit the CO and return to the main SIG area, type "/EXI" or hit ctrl-C. New users should read the helpfile named HOW2CO.HLP in the DL2 database before using the COnference facility.

4 - ORDER MANUALS & SET DEFAULTS

To get maximum enjoyment from using any part of SIG*ATARI, the SYSOPs strongly recommend that you purchace a copy of the SIG USERs manual, available for ordering online in the FEEDBACK section of Compuserve (GO CIS-54) and that you take a moment to setup your terminal parameters for all of the system (GO CIS-9) *AND* the additional user defaults that pertain to just SIG*ATARI. These are settable via the "OP" command in the main SIG area.

5 - DOWNLOADING PROGRAMS & TEXT

(Continued on page 4)

PRESIDENT'S RAM
by Gary Nolan

BRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!!!!!!!!

Are we unlucky or just have bad timing? It seems that the day of the January meeting turns out to be the coldest day of the year. In '82 it was 26 below with wind chills at -80+. This year was no exception, temp went down to minus 22 with WC's to -50/60. But just like '82 we had a super turnout. The cold weather must do strange things to us. Anyway thanks to the 175 (or there about) HEARTY souls that showed up we had a really good meeting.

Another thing that sets my teeth chattering besides the weather is the phone bill I ran up trying to get in contact with Atari. If you've tried recently you know what I mean. If you call Atari at 408-745-2000, after the 2nd or 3rd ring you get a recording telling you that all the lines are busy and to hold on and then you get the familiar ringing signal. It's much the same at the customer service number. What happens is that when you get that recorded message you are connected with Atari and Ma Bell starts the meter ticking. And it normally takes fifteen minutes or more to get an answer. I spent $12 before getting through, two other members wasted $15 and $20+ in their effort to talk to Atari. I say wasted because they still haven't gotten through. The number listed above is for the main switchboard, if you want Customer Service the number to call is 408-745-4851, the hours are from 10am to 2pm and 3pm to 7pm PST. Be prepared to wait for quite a while.

HELP WANTED

An Atari owner using AtariWriter with a TP-1 serial printer needs some help getting the printer to work properly. He's running it through an 850 interface and so far can't get to print right. If you can help give me a call and I'll give you his phone number.

We're still looking for help with the election committee. If you want to help call me. Time is growing short even though the elections are in May.

Any good typists out there? Any with free time? Lots of free time? Well here's a good time filler. The club would like to catalogue magazine articles as to type. It would be set up on Data Perfect and would list the articles by type, magazine and issue. We will supply the magazines and you supply the time. The resulting data base could then be used by members to locate helpful articles when they have a problem. We could also make copies available to other groups for their libraries.

HELP OFFERED

(Usually for a price)

For you MAC65 programmers, Design Software sends word that MUSIC16 is available to help you add music to your programs. Written in MAC65 it generates 16 bit music in the vertical blank interrupt period and its source code can be .Included into your programs. Being vertical blank driven it will not interfere with your main line code and includes several macros like REST, REPEAT, ENDING, CHORD1-2-3 and VOLUME among others to aid in writing music data files. It can accommodate many different tempos, sustain and decay rates as well as triplets. Cost is $25 + $2 S&H for single copies and $23 ect. for five to nine copies. It can be ordered from Design Software, PO Box 16187, San Francisco, CA 94116.

The programs might be a little old but at these prices you can get that game you've always wanted but couldn't afford. The quantities are limited so act fast. The following is a partial list of what is offered.

Choplifter	$13.95
Fort Apocalypse	$10.00
Zeppelin	$12.00
Wayout	$10.00
Deluxe Invaders	$10.00
Blue Max	$15.00
Dimension X	$15.00
F-15 Strike Eagle	$23.00

(Continued on page 5)

C64 REVIEW

The following message was found on the Compu-Serve Commodore Forum:

06-Jan-85 05:43:24 Fm: Sheldon Leemon 76004,72

Maybe you should try some of those computers before ranting like this. I am writing this on a PCjr. Next to it is my trusty old Atari. And of course,I have written "Mapping the 64" for Compute Books. Having professionally programmed all kinds of systems, I think that a Commodore type calling the Atari computers junk is quite laughable. (1) Atari computers work out of the box. I have had 8 c-64's so far, in order to get 2 working models (some of my DOAs were sent to me by Commodore as part of their developers program!) (2) If an Atari computer breaks, you can fix it! I mean actually getting new parts, instead of a whole new computers. It can be serviced quickly locally. (3) It has a much faster clock speed than the 64 (4) Its screen output is 200 times more legible. It also has 16 shades of 16 colors, which allows much better contrast on all sorts of graphics programs. (5) It has more graphics modes, and more flixble. (6) It finally has a RELIABLE disk drive that works MUCH faster than the 1541. Without a reliable drive, no matter what software the 64 has is USELESS. Can you imagine somebody using a 64 for anything critical, without a LOT of disk drive backup?

I wrote the Mapping book on my Atari with Atariwriter. The machine is cheaper, more capable, MUCH more reliable, etc. The BASIC is by FAR better than the Commodore one (its just a matter of what you are used to) and FULLY supports the graphics, sound and Operating system. Come to think of it, the C-64 OS is so primative that it does not even support autoboot disks. Calling the Atari computers 'junk' is a little silly. If you want to see junk, get one

SIG*ATARI (Con't)

The ability to download or capture messages, bulletins, textfiles, and programs from the DL databases, is a feature of your terminal software and modem. There is a WIDE variety of terminal software currently available for ATARI computers, and every program has different capabilities and unique operating commands. The CompuServe system does NOT support all of the file transfer protocols currently popular in the ATARI community. Certain programs in the DL's may only be downloaded using specific termnl programs or protocols. The SYSOPs are familiar with many of the popular terminal programs in use, but to answer your help requests we need to know WHICH terminal pgm you are using. Before downloading or capturing any program in the DL's, PLEASE read the brief description of the file(s) with the (BRO)wse command in the DL and look for any accompanying .DOC file.

Additional membership information is available in the"MI" file.

SYSOP*Ron Luks 76703,254
SYSOP*Michael Reichmann 74015,1534
SYSOP*Steve Ahlstrom 70007,1657
SYSOP*Russ Wetmore 72435,1234
SYSOP*Greg Leslie 71565,235
SYSOP*Richard Brudzynski 74035,1550

(Con't on page 5)

PRESIDENT'S RAM (Continued)

Most of the Spinnaker kids software is priced at $15. This is a partial list and as we said quantities are limited. To order call, Mars Merchandising (312) 530-0988 and tell them you're interested in the Atari software sale.

We will have some CompuServe Kits for sale at the upcoming meeting. The Kits will go for $25. The kits come with five hours of free connect time. At $6 dollars an hour (current charges) you subscribe for nothing. If you want one but can't make the meeting give Dave or myself a call to reserve one.

We have ordered more of the five dollar joysticks and they should be her in time for the meeting also. These things have turned out to be very popular, more than we expected. So far we've sold about one hundred of them.

Linda Scott will be putting together another Compute Press book order. If there are any of these book that you've been thinking of getting be at the next meeting and see Linda. Savings of up to 40% can be had depending on the book ordered.

HE'S NOT UP TO HIS OLD TRICKS, IS HE?

A new book by a man who worked with Jack Tramiel at Commodore claims that the reason that Commodore announced some, and even showed, some products but never brought them to the market was to keep it's competitors off balance. They would announce a product with great features at a really low price and the competition would swear and go back to the drawing board to try to find ways to cut costs to meet Tramiels. But by then Fast Jack would be moving on to something else. The author claims that the VIC-20 was brought out, even though it had very limited memory, to scare the Japaneese and to keep them out of the market. The reasoning was that even they couldn't match the price the the VIC was to be sold for. Whether or not it's true it makes you wonder about some of the things that have been announced by Atari lately. Even so, I've got a 520ST on my list of things to watch for this spring. If you want to read something interesting, catch the interview with Steven Jobs in this months Playboy. It gives you an insight into where Apple is heading in the next few years. I don't think they have the resources to fight a two sided battle. But real soon they're going to be pushed into it.

YOU'LL ONLY NEED ONE

Hitachi has shown some new disk drives worth looking at. One is an optical laser cartridge system that can store 2.6 gigabytes on one double sided disk. Then there are two 5 1/4" drives, one is a 171 meg hard disk and a 6.5 floppy drive with a transfer rate of 3 million bits/sec. If Atari can bring out a $600-15 meg hard disk, well you might be able to afford two, but you'll probably only need one. Printers, monitors, modems all computer peripherals are dropping in price and increasing in features. '85 should be a very good year indeed.

HERE WE GO AGAIN

Board of Directors Meeting .. Feb. 14th
Milatari East (Ambruster) ... Feb. 16th
CP/M - ATR Meeting (Don Wilcox's home) .... Feb. 26th
Milatari West (Waukesha) .... Feb. 28th

Till the 16th.....

- -

C64 REVIEW (Continued)

of the computers that have a 50% fail rate, that won't run their own CPM software, that can't be used with a normal TV set. In otherwords, look down at that piece of junk you are using! P.S. to top it off, its overpriced to boot!

Love, Sheldon (Mapping the piece of junk) Leemon

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS of WINTER CES

by Russ Wetmore 12 Jan 1985/Compu-Serve

Jack Tramiel seems to have done it again. Any doubts I had regarding Atari's (at least short term) future have been alleviated for now. The "New" Atari came out fighting at CES, aggressively showing new product with ridiculously low prices, considering market precedent.

Commodore's showing was almost embarrassing. The long awaited Amiga computer was nowhere to be found. The new Commodore 128, although in a much prettier case than its predecessor, the 64, seems like a case of way too little, <way> too late. Both the Plus-4 and Commodore 16 were in evidence, but were roundly ignored. Their new laptop computer seemed interesting, but with total incompatibility with their current software and with demonstrations consisting of very strained, canned demos I can't call it anything other than an oddity just yet.

The traffic in both booths told the tale - I had absolutely no problem inspecting the new Commodore product, but had to wait until almost the end of the show to get close enough to see anything in the Atari booth. The Atari booth was wall to wall people throughout the show.

What do I think of the new Atari computers? Well, the XE line seems like a solid enhancement of the old 800's. The new 3 1/2" drives have been long overdue (although the only XE that had the new drive running on it was the mockup of the XE portable, of which I was told was a one-of-a-kind prototype.) The lack of parallel bus <shouldn't> be a problem - an Atari engineer told me that the cartridge port had been extended to include enough signals that adapters for products utilizing the current 800XL parallel bus should be easy to create. I don't particularly care for the feel of the new keyboard, but the case is pretty, and hey! - for $100 I can live with it.

The new ST line, though, is where Atari's future lies. For "under $400" the potential of the 130ST is enormous. ANTIC has done a great job relating the relative merits of the ST line, so I won't duplicate them here. I must say in all honesty that the GEM based software I saw running was very canned, and very prone to failure - one demonstrator was constantly turning a demo 130ST off and on to reset it after program crashes. But, given the amount of time Atari's engineers had to get the demos up and running before the show, I'm a little amazed that there were as few problems as there were. One 130ST running a FORTH model was doing some remarkable things through its MIDI interface, driving a synthesizer with a very impressive demo.

The other Atari hardware being shown consisted of a printer (I hesitate to keep saying "low-cost" because <everything> they showed was inexpensive), a plotter, some very nice monitors (monochrome, composite color and RGB) and a new modem that is supposed to look like an 835/1030 to the computer, is hopefully much more reliable, and would fit in your pocket. All looked like they were constructed very well, and the value for the dollar is tremendous.

The Tramiels were conspicuous by their <presence>. While the senior Tramiel and his son Sam spent most of their time politicking, Leonard Tramiel was at most times available at the booth to answer questions and sell the merits of the new products, as well as demonstrate them. One of the things I was most impressed by was their collective enthusiasm - the "vision" seems to have returned to Atari.

The competition? Well, I've already described Commodore's showing. (They

(Continued on page 7)

CES IMPRESSIONS (Continued)

<did> have a new modem that seemed very exciting, especially for the price, but as it hasn't been formally announced to the best of my knowledge, I can't comment.) Rumors were flying at the show as to Apple and IBM's intentions given Atari's showing. Look for Apple to drastically reduce the prices on their "32-bit" line, and a "color Mac" announcement seems iminent. I would guess that IBM also reduces the prices on their stock PC, although not as much as Apple, given their success with price reductions with the PCjr and the more fierce competition. We all know that IBM marches to their own drummer, though, so your guess is as good as mine.

Some other interesting tidbits: Music programs (and music interfaces) seemed to be in vogue at the show. The West Hall, which is where most of the computer-related exhibits were located, sounded like a concert hall with everyone trying to out-play each other. I counted three companies with MIDI interfaces (for Commodore) and at least 6 others with dedicated music programs (again, mostly Commodore.)

John Demar's company, Quantum Microsystems, Inc., was showing their new R:Link serial interface and Q*Modem low cost 300 baud modem. Both products seem very nice. The Q*Modem has a very usable terminal built in, with some very neat graphic features, as well as an auto-dial directory and help prompts.

Nintendo suprized everybody by showing their new "game" machine. Honestly, it has some cute graphics capabilities, but a game machine in 1985? Give me a break.

There were a number of companies with "personal" robots. Gag. For what they're capable of doing (or I should say, what they're <incapable> of) I'll wait another couple of years.

Sinclair was showing (again) their cheap 68000 computer. Emphasis on the word "cheap." They still have the slowest word processor known to man, supposedly written in machine code but as slow as a poorly written BASIC program. Their mini-television was nice, though.

Infocom held a party the likes of which I'll never forget. They rented out the old Las Vegas Presley mansion and staged a murder. Honest to God. It was a real live "whodunnit" held to promote one of their new adventure games, Suspect. The actors were top-notch, and I can't remember when I've had so much fun.

Epson had a whole slew of new printers on display, as well as <their> new mini-television. They followed Atari's lead and changed the numbers on all of their products. (I'll be calling the 65XE an "800" absent mindedly for months, I bet.) There weren't any great speed or performance breakthroughs on the new printers - the emphasis was placed on tieing certain printers specifically to certain computers. No doubt the reason was to solve the problem of "Does that printer work with <my> computer?"

The Coleco booth was a laugh. With ColecoVision dieing out and the Adam computer sold, the most interesting thing was probably the Cabbage Patch Dolls they had strewn about.

That's about all I can remember at one sitting. All in all, I was <very> impressed by the new Atari line, but am still maintaining a "wait and see" attitude until they are released. If Mr. Tramiel can hold the prices to their announced levels, can get the products out fast enough, and <IF> we don't see another quality control fiasco that plagued old Commodore product, then Atari has some winners on their hands. Let's hope they do well.

OPEN LETTER to "Computists"

The following letter was forwarded to **Info-64** by **Progressive Peripherals & Software.** It is reproduced here in its entirety.
-editor

TO THOSE OF YOU WHO PIRATE COMPUTER SOFTWARE, AND THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE CONSIDERED IT BECAUSE OF FINANCIAL OR PEER PRESSURE, PLEASE HEAR ME OUT. I AM A PROGRAMMER. YOU HAVE PROBABLY HEARD THE LAMENTS OF THE SOFTWARE COMPANIES WHO HAVE SUFFERED LOSSES OF PROFIT. SOFTWARE RETAILERS ARE HURTING FROM REDUCED SALES EVEN IF THEY ARE RELUCTANT TO ADMIT IT. SURELY YOU HAVE READ THE THOUGHTS OF MAGAZINE EDITORS WHO ARE TRYING TO SUPPORT THEIR ADVERTISERS WITHOUT ALIENATING THEIR READERS. WHILE THERE ARE A FEW SUCCESS STORIES STILL FLOATING AROUND, AND A FEW COMPANIES ARE REAPING HUGE PROFITS FROM THE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY, MOST ARE NOT. IF YOU ARE UP ON CURRENT EVENTS, YOU HAVE NOTICED THE LARGE NUMBER OF HIGH-TECH HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE COMPANIES WHICH HAVE SUFFERED LAYOFFS OR COMPLETELY FOLDED IN RECENT MONTHS. IN MY OPINION, THIS PHENOMENON STEMS FROM A SERIES OF EVENTS BEGINNING WITH SOFTWARE PIRACY.

WHY SHOULD ANYONE PAY THIRTY OR FORTY DOLLARS FOR A PIECE OF ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE WHEN THEY CAN GET A COPY FOR THE PRICE OF A DISKETTE? THAT, I AGREE, IS A GOOD QUESTION. SOFTWARE COMPANIES ARE AT LEAST AS GUILTY AS THE PIRATES THEMSELVES WHEN THEY EXPECT THE CONSUMER TO PLUNK DOWN A HEFTY CHUNK OF DOUGH FOR A GAME THAT IS OF MARGINAL QUALITY. JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, WHEN THIS INDUSTRY WAS YOUNG, PROGRAMMERS WERE PUTTING OUT BETTER AND BETTER PRODUCTS. CUSTOMERS WERE EXCITED BY THE CONSTANT IMPROVEMENTS AND BOUGHT LARGE QUANTITIES OF SOFTWARE. HOWEVER, THERE WAS A PRICE TO PAY. BETTER QUALITY PRODUCTS MEANT MORE DEVELOPMENT TIME AND IN THIS RAPIDLY CHANGING INDUSTRY, TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE. MARKETING EXECUTIVES WERE FACED WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT BY THE TIME THEIR NEW PRODUCT WAS READY FOR MARKET, THE FAD WOULD HAVE PASSED. WHAT WAS CONCEIVED AS A VIABLE PRODUCT MAY HAVE BECOME PASSE' AT ITS CULMINATION. THE ANSWER: MINIMIZE R&D TIME TO MAXIMIZE PROFIT!

ABOUT THE SAME TIME, THE SOFTWARE PURCHASER WAS REALIZING THE EASE AT WHICH SOFTWARE COULD BE DUPLICATED. THE SEEMINGLY INNOCENT TRADING OF GAMES BETWEEN FELLOW COMPUTER USERS GRADUALLY BALLOONED INTO LARGE SCALE PIRACY. ATTEMPTS BY SOFTWARE MANUFACTURERS TO PROTECT THEIR SOFTWARE ONLY TAUNTED HACKERS AND SO BEGAN THE EROSION OF RESPECT BETWEEN SOFTWARE PRODUCERS AND SOFTWARE CONSUMERS.

IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THIS SITUATION COULD NOT ENDURE. AFTER ALL, IF WE SHOVE ALL THE MAKETING ASPECTS OF THE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY ASIDE FOR A MOMENT, IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE PROGRAMMER WRITES FOR THE END USER. IF THE COMPUTER OWNER WANTS HIGH QUALITY GAMES, THEN THE COMPUTER OWNER MUST BECOME AN OWNER OF THAT GAME. IF THAT GAME WAS PIRATED AND NOT PURCHASED, THEN THE PROGRAMMER RECEIVES NO INCENTIVE TO CONTINUE PRODUCING HIGH QUALITY SOFTWARE. I AM NOT SPEAKING SIMPLY OF MONETARY INCENTIVES IN THE FORM OF SALARY OR ROYALTIES, BUT ALSO OF RESPECT FOR A PERSON'S HARD WORK.

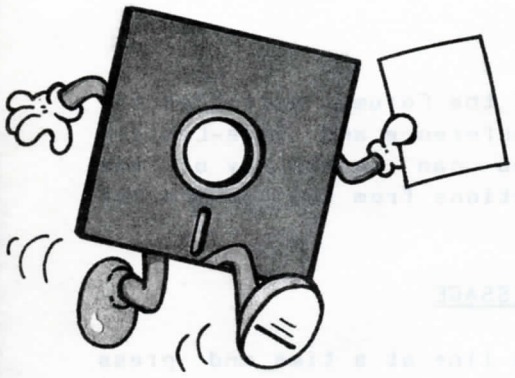
I WISH TO DISPEL A COMMON MYTH THAT PROGRAMMERS CRANK THESE GAMES OUT IN NO TIME AND MAKE BIG BUCKS. IT TOOK ME THREE MONTHS OF VIRTUALLY UNINTERRUPTED TWELVE HOUR DAYS TO CREATE PERPLEXIAN CHALLENGER, SOMETHING IN THE AREA OF 900 HOURS. IT TOOK MY ASSOCIATE, SEAN MOORE, AND MYSELF EACH OVER 800 HOURS TO PRODUCE WIZARD. COLLECTIVELY, THESE 2500 HOURS ARE THE EQUIVALENT OF 62.5 WEEKS OF WORK. THAT IS MORE THAN A YEAR OF EFFORT. BASED ON MY PROFITS FROM THESE GAMES TO DATE, THIS COMES OUT AT LESS THAN MINIMUM WAGE. SURELY, YOU CAN'T THINK I AM IN THIS JUST FOR THE MONEY.

IT WAS TO MY GREATEST HUMILIATION AND CHAGRIN THAT PIRATES WERE COPYING MY PROGRAMS, PASSING THEM OUT LIKE CAMPAIGN PROPAGANDA TO BOLSTER THEIR OWN EGOS; AND FURTHERMORE, SENDING ME BROKEN COPIES WITH THEIR SIGNATURE ATTACHED. I WAS EVEN INFORMED THAT AT ONE TIME YOU COULD AQUIRE COPIES OF THESE GAMES AND OTHERS SIMPLY BY DOWNLOADING THEM FROM A LARGE NATIONWIDE TELEPHONE-MODEM NETWORK.

THIS, MY FRIENDS, IS THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM. WHEN PROGRAMMERS NO LONGER HAVE THE DESIRE TO PRODUCE QUALITY SOFTWARE, AND CUSTOMERS REFUSE TO SUPPORT THE REMAINING EXAMPLES OF GOOD EFFORT, THEN AUTOMATON PROGRAMMERS WILL PRODUCE AUTOMATON SOFTWARE FOR AUTOMATON CONSUMERS. SALES WILL BE DICTATED TO AN EVEN GREATER DEGREE BY FLASHY ADS AND FLASHY PACKAGING, AND THE SOUL OF A PROGRAM, THE ART OF IT, WILL DIE.

IT MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE FOR HOME ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE. YET THE SHAKE UP IN THE COMPUTER INDUSTRY MIGHT MEAN A WAKE UP IN THE MINDS OF SOFTWARE PRODUCERS AND PURCHASERS ALIKE. WHETHER COMPUTING IS A HOBBY, OR A FUTURE VOCATION, WE MUST ALL DO WHAT WE CAN TO SUPPORT IT.

-STEVEN M. LUEDDERS
PROGRESSIVE PERIPHERALS & SOFTWARE



FROM THE DISK OF
Dave Frazer

COMPU-SERVE KITS ARE IN!

The Compu-Serve Starter Kits are in. We ordered extra sets and you may still be able to put your name on one. The price is $25 which includes the users guide in a slip case binder, a user identification number and password along with 5 hours of access time. Call me to reserve your kit.

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SIG*ATARI

On page 2 of this issue is an outline of what you can expect find on SIG*ATARI Forum within Compu-Serve. SIG*ATARI is one the most popular forums on Compuserve. You can find the latest in Atari hot tips and rumors, download some of the finest public domain software, conference with Atari-ites for all over the U.S. and Canada, and find help for all your Atari problems.

Beginning on page 10 you can find the instructions which will allow you to take advantage of the SIG*ATARI forum.

I will be conducting a SIG*ATARI/Compu-Serve workshop at the March Milatari West meeting.

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INEXPENSIVE COLOR TV's

Inexpensive color TV's (under $200 for 13 inch models and under $300 for 19 inch models) will soon be climbing in price. REASON: Most of the budget sets for sale in the US are imported from Korea and Taiwan. Both countries are now under pressure from the US Department of Commerce. To Avoid paying higher import duties, the companies will either have to raise their prices or assemble the set here (which will increase their costs).

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TWO HELP ITEMS NOW IN LIBRARY

Having problems with your 410 program recorder? Ron Friedel has prepared copies of articles which cover many of the methods used to improve the preformence of the 410. Check out "TAPE TOPICS" and tune up your recorder.

Missed last months workshop on how to build your own surge protector? Then you want to check out "KEEP POWER-LINE POLLUTION OUT OF YOUR COMPUTER". Follow the instruction and protect your investment.

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NEED TO MAKE A MODEM CABLE FOR YOU 850?

I recently had to build a cable to connect a US Robotics Password Modem (DP-25 connector) to an Atari 850 interface unit (DP-9 connector). Here are the wiring connections I made;

DP-25 pins	connects to	DP-9 pins
2	<---------->	3
3	<---------->	4
5	<---------->	8
6	<---------->	6
7	<---------->	5
8	<---------->	2
20	<---------->	1

- - - - - - - - - - -

SIG*ATARI USER INSTRUCTIONS

B - bulletins
CO - conference
D - delete
DL - library
E - exit
G x- go to page x
I - instructions
L - leave a message
M - previous menu
MI - membership information
NEW- new/changes
OFF- log off
OP - set options
QS - quick scan
R - read messages
R x- run SIG x
RT - read thread
S - scan headers
SD - scan & display
SEN- send a message
SB - sub-topic names
SS - set sub-topic
T - go DISPLA
U - user log
UST- current users
V - interests
X - database

Forum Information File

A Forum on CompuServe's Information Services is used to enhance communications between specific individuals with similar interests. Each Forum offers messaging, bulletins, real time conferencing, and information storage and retrieval. The messaging feature of a Forum allows you to electronically store or leave messages for other Forum members. You can also read messages left by other members. Bulletins may be posted by the Forum administrator concerning Forum information and events. The Conference mode is for interactive discussions with other members currently online in the Forum. Information storage and retrieval is available in the Data-Library area.

Sub-Topics, which are dedicated to areas of specific interest within the general topic area of the Forum, partition the messaging, conference and Data-Library functions. You can choose any of the following functions from the Forum's top menu.

L - LEAVE A MESSAGE

Enter text one line at a time and press the enter/return key to submit the line. Errors can be corrected by backspacing and re-entering the text before the enter/return key has been pressed. A message can have a maximum of 96 lines or 2500 characters, whichever comes first. You are prompted for To: and Subject:, each can be 24 characters long.

LEAVE OPTIONS:
S - Store message.
Sn - Store message in Sub-topic "n".
SP - Store privately . You are prompted for the PPN of the user to whom yo are sending the message.
SU - Store message unformatted.
A - Abort message.

R - READ MESSAGES

RF - Read messages in forward serial order (from oldest to newest).
RFn- Read messages in forward order from message "n".
RR - Read messages in reverse serial order (from (newest to oldest).
RRn- Read messages in reverse order from message "n".
RN - Read all new messages. New messages are those stored since the last time you read messages.
RM - Read messages marked specifically for your PPN.
RA - Abort read command.
RI - Read individual message. You are prompted for the message number.
RS - Read message by searching. You are prompted for the search key of To:, Subject:, or From:.
RT - Read thread of messages. A thread consists of a string of messages in

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SIG*ATARI INSTRUCTIONS (Continued)

response to an original message.

After reading a message, you may then:

UA - Use address only to send a reply. This should be used when responding to part of a message. You are prompted for a new subject .
RE - Reply to this message. This should be used when you want to use the same header information.
T - Return to the top Forum menu.
C - Continue with next message.
N - Continue with next message. In Command Mode <ENTER> will also display the next message.
D - Deletes the message. This option is available only if the message was sent by you or for you.
NS - No stop between messages. Scrolling continues until a message that was sent by you or for you is accessed.
RA - Read message again.
RP - Read previous message of the thread.
RR - Read reply. If anyone has replied to the current message, the RR option displays the reply messages. Successive RR's display subsequent reply messages.

CO - CONFERENCE MODE

Conferencing is a "real time" mode of communication. Each Sub-Topic has two "channels" or "rooms" for conference discussions. When CO is requested, the system identifies the channel/room and the number of active users there. All options in CO are prefaced with a /.

/EXI - Exit CO and return to top menu .
/HAN or /NAME - Allows you to change your CO name or "handle". Your Forum membership name is used if you do not specify a change with this command.
/HELP- To receive all CO options.
/JOB - To receive your job # status.
/MON n - Listen to other channels/rooms. "n" indicates the channel/room number.
/OFF - Exit CO and log off of system.
/PPN - Display PPN with messages.
/NOPPN - Turn off /PPN. This is the current default setting.
/SBU m,n - Squelch by user PPN. "m,n" indicates the PPN of the user.
/SQU xxx - Squelch by name "xxx".
/SCR xyz - Scramble on key "xyz".
/SMC xyz - Clear
/SCR on key "xyz".
/XCL xyz - Unscramble receiver on key "xyz".
/UNS - Unscramble all.
/ROOM - Type status of users on in this Conference room.
/STA - Type status of users on this channel.
/TALK n - Talk privately with one other user. "n" designates the user's job number.
/TIM - Type time, day, and date.
/UST - Type a status report of all users.
/UST n - Type user status of channel /room "n".
/WHO - Type PPN of last talker.

DL - DATA LIBRARY

Each Sub-Topic has a data library that contains files of information pertinent to the Sub-Topic area. The following options are available:

DES - Description of the particular Data Library.
BRO - Browse through file headers. A file header contains a description of the file, keywords, PPN of submittor, number of accesses and date of submission.

You are prompted for a search string;

/KEY: - keywords and/or
/AGE: - days since submission.

Pressing the enter/return key defaults these options allowing you to browse all files beginning with the most recent

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SIG*ATARI INSTRUCTIONS (Continued)

submission in a reverse chronological order.

Browse options:

R - Read file.
D - Download (see additional information on upload/download).
T - Return to top DL menu.

Press the enter/return key to continue browsing file headers.

DIR - Directory of Data Library files.
DOW - Download a Data Library file to your personal computer. You will be prompted for the file name and the protocal type.
UPL - Upload a new file. An uploaded file goes into a preview area until the SYSOP/Forum Administrator reviews it and merges it into the Data Library. See additional information on up/download.
HEL - Help.
DL - Change to another Sub-Topic Data Library.
EXI - Exit DL and return to the Forum top menu.

Upload/Download

When uploading or downloading files, a communications protocol type is requested. The options are:

Xmodem - Christensen's protocol
A - Compuserve's A protocol
B - CompuServe's B protocol
DC2/DC4 - Buffer capture protocol

Following a successful upload, you are prompted for a description of the file and the keywords associated with it. These are attached to your file and remain in the preview area until the SYSOP/Forum Administrator acts upon them.

B - BULLETINS

Bulletins are posted by the SYSOP/Forum Administrator containing information about the Forum. The bulletin menu is as follows:

1) Short bulletin
2) Long bulletin
3) Conference bulletin
4) Data Library bulletin
5) Membership bulletin
6) Return to Top Menu

V - MEMBER INTEREST FILE

The Member Interest File contains information about the users of the Forum.

Options are:

A - Add your interests. You are prompted for your name, state, and interests pertaining to the Forum.
C - Change your interests. You are prompted for information.
D - Delete your entry.
S - Scan all members. You are prompted for a search string. If you want to scan all members, press the enter /return key.
T - Return to top command menu.

U - USER ENTRY LOG

This file is a log of usage on the Forum.

Names and PPNs are displayed by accesses beginning with the most recent and scrolling in a reverse chronological order. This is an efficient way to find out who has accessed the Forum recently.

OP - OPTIONAL COMMAND MODE

The Optional Command Mode allows settings specific to your own PPN within the Forum to be changed. Changes are effective only for the current session unless the P (permanent) option has been requested from the menu. Options may be changed by either entering a command or

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SIG*ATARI INSTRUCTIONS (Continued)

entering a number as a menu choice. Numbers toggle the current setting.

BR - Set brief mode. This suppresses display of command, sub-command and option menus.

NB - This returns the display of menus.

LL - Change line length.

FIL - Use Filge editor to compose messages.

SED - Use Forum editor to compose messages.

DS - Set a default Sub-topic. Upon entry to the Forum, you will default to a specific Sub-topic.

CN - Change your name within the Forum.

PC - Change your prompt character.

RNS - RN (read new) command skips messages you left.

RNT - RN (read new) command types messages you left.

TWM - Type waiting messages. Upon entry to the Forum, messages waiting for you are typed.

MWM - Mark waiting messages. Upon entry to the Forum, messages waiting for you are marked for retrieval with the RM command.

ST - Stop scrolling between messages.

NS - No stop between messages.

P - Make options permanent.

Options remain for future sessions until you change them. To change any optional setting, enter the appropriate option.

SB - SUB-TOPICS

There are eleven Sub-Topics within each Forum which distinguish specific areas of interest. Selecting SB provides a listing of all the Sub-topics of the SIG/Forum. You can also select a Sub-Topic by specifiying a number from 0 to 10.

ADDITIONAL COMMANDS

HELP, H or ? - Display the "help" file(s).

I - Display a summary of the Forum commands.

NEW - New file. This file provides a listing of new features contained in a new version of the Forum software upon its release.

MI - Display Forum membership information.

UST - User status. This is a listing of all those currently using the Forum. Included in the information is a user's job number, PPN (User ID), node name and program name.

(JOB USER ID NODE PRGM
28 70006,313 T10ACH SIG)

SEN - Send one line note. This is a command which may be used to send a one line note to anyone currently in the Forum. The command must be followed by the Job number that the receiver is running. (For example: SEN 28 Hi there! Go to CO!) Use USTAT to get the receiver's job number.

SS - Set Sub-topic. This command enables you to set the Sub-topic which you want to access exclusively. SS may be used to set specific Sub-topics when reading messages.

LOG-OFF COMMANDS

LOG - Logs you off of system and displays the User ID: prompt.

OFF - Disconnects from system and drops carrier.

BYE - Disconnects from system and drops carrier.

GO - Go to page.

M - Return to previous menu of system.

EXIT - Return to previous menu of system.

CONTROL KEYS

Control characters (control key and another key pushed simultaneously) can be used to "control" output. The following are the most widely used within the Forum.

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SIG*ATARI (Con't) :: DUNGEONWARE Available

Ctrl-P - Aborts output and returns you to function command level.
Ctrl-S - Suspends output immediately, stops scrolling.
Ctrl-Q - Restarts output (scrolling) after a CTRL-S.

Ctrl-A - Suspends output at the end of current line.
Ctrl-W - Restarts output after a Ctrl-A.
Ctrl-O - Allows user to skip message text while retrieving.
Ctrl-U - Aborts input file and deletes line you are entering.
Ctrl-V - Displays input line. This control character is particularly helpful in CO.

GLOSSARY

SYSOP/FORUM ADMINISTRATOR is a person responsible for operating the Forum.

PPN - Project,Programmer Number. Also known as your User ID.

Data Library - A collection of data files which includes a description file. Each data file includes a description and keywords.

Unformatted - A term used to describe the manner in which a message can be stored. This type of storage leaves the message as text without reformatting.

Upload - A procedure used to transfer data from a micro-computer to a Forum's Data-Library.

Download - A procedure used to transfer data from the Forum's Data-Library to a micro-computer.

Conferencing - A mode of communication which allows simultaneous users to "talk" to each other by typing in their discussion via the computer keyboard. Forum conferencing is very similar to CB radio or telephone conference calls except that you are typing instead of speaking.

MIlatari, in association with Tom Krischan of TECHNIMETRICS, is please to announce the availablity of shareable software.

TECHNIMETRICS has released their first DungeonWare products: Dungeons and Dragons Character Generator which help you generate your own characters. Second is 'CAVERN OF THE KING' - Your village is robbed of its sacred gems. You are called to appear in front of the twon council. You must find the gems! A shareable copy of the DDCG disk will be available for all MILATARI members by the end of February.

Dungeonware is a unique software idea using the Dungeons and Dragons theme. DungeonWare is written in Atari BASIC for the Atari 800 computer system with at least one disk drive. The author encourages you to share the software with your friends.

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President.....Gary Nolan....353-9716
Vice President...Chris Stieber.529-2663
Secretary.....Linda Scott...466-2314
Treasurer.....Steve Tupper..462-8178

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This newsletter is written and printed by members of the Milwaukee Area ATARI User's Group (MILATARI), an association of individuals with a common interest in using and programming ATARI computers. MILATARI is not affiliated with the ATARI company or any other commercial organizations.

Your contributions of articles are always welcome. You may submit your article on ATARI compatible compatible cassette or diskette, on typewritten form or you can arrange with the editor to upload your file via modem at either 300 or 1200 baud. You can can send GRAPHICS EIGHT or SEVEN PLUS screens stored on disk in a straight 62 sector binary file of the actual screen bytes. A MICROPAINTER file or binary file saved through +PICTURE PLUS+ will work fine.

Mail your articles and inquires to the editor at the return address on this newsletter.

MILATARI
Milwaukee Area Atari Users Group

MILATARI is an independent, user education group which is not affiliated with ATARI, INC. The newsletter is the official publication of MILATARI and is intended for the education of its members as well as for the dissemination of information concerning ATARI computer products.

MILATARI membership is open to individuals and families who are interested in using and programming ATARI computers. The membership includes a subscription to this newsletter and access to the club libraries. The annual membership fee is $15 for individual or $20 for a family.

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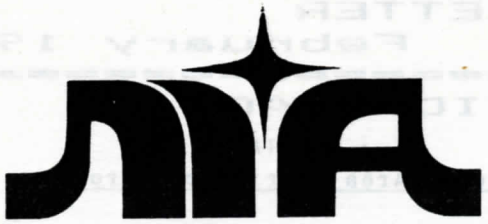

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